

Complaints Policy

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External or Internal Facing	External

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Complaints Policy

1. Purpose

Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL) is committed to providing high-quality services to the organisations and individuals we work with. We actively seek feedback from our members and users, and we recognise that there may be times when people are unhappy with some aspect of our work.

This policy is designed to make it easy for you to tell us when something isn't right, or to share any comments you have about VAL. All complaints are taken seriously, and we will treat you with respect and consideration throughout the process.

Compliments

Should you wish to compliment VAL, please submit this via the contact form, email or in person and we'll ensure the feedback is rewarded and shared.

2. Treatment of VAL staff and volunteers

We take all complaints seriously. However, we will not tolerate abusive behaviour towards our staff, including swearing, shouting, or any other form of intimidation. We understand that you may feel upset or frustrated, but we expect all interactions with our staff to remain calm and respectful. This expectation also applies to anyone supporting you with your complaint.

A Senior Manager or the Chief Executive may be consulted if necessary.

Under no circumstances will we tolerate any form of abuse or discrimination based on protected characteristics. This includes comments or behaviour related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Any behaviour of this nature will be treated as a serious breach of our standards.

3. Submitting a complaint

Complaints can be submitted through a range of accessible channels, the quickest being to use the Contact Us section of our website. However, if this is not possible, please log the complaint with a member of staff or directly with any

manager, who will write the complaint details for you and use the website to log this on your behalf. When emailed complaints are sent to info@val.org.uk they will be forwarded to the relevant manager.

You can also use the form at the end of this policy to capture your complaint, or you can put it in writing in another format, for example, write a letter. In either case, you should feel free to obtain assistance with writing your complaint if you need it; such assistance could be given by a friend or family member, a Citizens Advice Bureau or Advocacy group or a similar organisation. You can post or hand-deliver your complaint to VAL, marking the envelope clearly “Private & Confidential, for the attention of the Management Team”. Our address is: Stringer House, 34 Lupton Street, Leeds LS10 2QW.

We would also accept complaints via email, via telephone or in person.

We may ask to speak to you prior to logging the complaint to see if we can informally resolve it to your satisfaction prior to formally investigating it. Where this isn't possible, we'll move directly to a written response. Please let us know in the complaint if you need any support in receiving your complaint response. If a complaint is very serious, we may move straight to a formal response.

Should you not be satisfied with our response you can send a written appeal. Further details of this can be found in Section 6.

4. Process steps

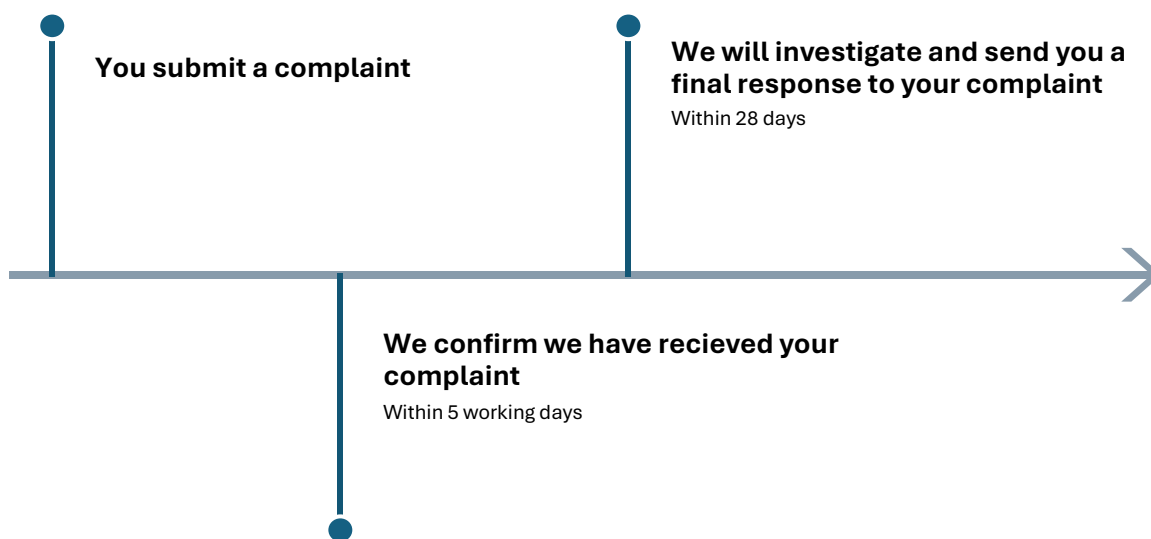
When you submit a complaint, it will be investigated by the most appropriate manager within the organisation. For example, if the complaint is about a member of the team, it will be passed to their direct manager for investigation. We will let you know this in our response to you.

We will send you confirmation of receiving the complaint within **5 working days**. This will be sent via email. We can send this in the post if you request this.

We have **28 days** to formally respond to your complaint; however, we will aim to respond as soon as possible. This will be a written response which will be attached to an email to you. Should you wish to have a posted copy of our response please provide a postal address.

During the investigation, we may ask to speak to you. This can be on the phone, via an online meeting or in person. If it is in person, you can bring a person of your choice from outside VAL.

Should there be a reasonable delay to investigating your complaint, we will let you know via email as soon as possible.



5. Confidentiality

We will treat your complaint with respect and privacy. Only those involved in the investigation will be made aware of it and no-one will be told who is making the complaint unless necessary as part of the investigation. You should be aware, however, that if your complaint is specifically about a member of staff or a trustee of VAL, it will be necessary for that person to be told that a complaint has been lodged against them, to allow the investigation to proceed.

6. Appealing your response

You can appeal if you are unhappy with any part of the formal process, including the final decision. You must finish the formal process before you can appeal. If you want to appeal, fill in the appeal form that comes with the letter you receive after the formal process. You can get help with this if you need it. Post, email or deliver the form to VAL in an envelope marked “Private and Confidential: for the



attention of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)". The CEO must receive your appeal within **5 working days** of you getting the final response.

The CEO will have **14 working days** to formally respond to your appeal. Once again, you will received confirmation via email once your appeal has been received, within **5 working days**.

Should the complaint be about the CEO, a member of the Board of Trustees will investigate and respond to the complaint. In this case should there be an appeal another Trustee will investigate and respond to the appeal.



7. Complaint Form

If you have a complaint about Voluntary Action Leeds, please complete this form and send it to info@val.org.uk with subject line: Complaint.

This form is to be completed by the person making the complaint. If someone is completing the form on your behalf, ask them to complete sections a and b.

You can also log this via our website in the 'Contact Us' section.

Name of person complaining	
Telephone number	
Address including postcode	
Email	
a. Name of person completing this if not the person complaining	
b. What relation are you to the person with the complaint	
Please give details of your complaint making it as specific as possible, including the name of the person(s) against whom it is made (continue a separate sheet if necessary).	



Please give the name and address of any witnesses if appropriate	
What is your desired outcome (what do you want to happen?)	
Signature of complainant	
Date	

